

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet which has a film layer made substantially of only a fine metal powder formed directly on a metal surface of the magnet, particles of the fine metal powder having a ~~longer~~ longest diameter in a range of 0.001 μm to 5 μm , wherein said permanent magnet is a sintered magnet or a bonded magnet.

Claim 2 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein said fine metal powder contains at least one metal component selected from copper (Cu), iron (Fe), cobalt (Co), nickel (Ni) and chromium (Cr).

Claim 3 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein said fine metal powder is a fine copper (Cu) powder.

Claim 4 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein said fine metal powder has a Vickers hardness value of 60 or less.

Claim 5 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein said fine metal powder contains at least one metal component selected from Sn, Zn, Pb, Cd, In, Au, Ag and Al.

Claim 6 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein said fine metal powder is a fine aluminum powder.

Claim 7 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein said rare earth metal-based permanent magnet is an R-Fe-B based permanent magnet.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 2, wherein said rare earth metal-based permanent magnet is a bonded magnet, and a resinous portion of the surface of said magnet is coated with a film layer made of a fine metal powder which contains at least one metal component selected from Cu, Fe, Ni, Co and Cr.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 4, wherein said rare earth metal-based permanent magnet is a bonded magnet, and a resinous portion of the surface of said magnet is coated with a film layer made of a fine metal powder having a Vickers hardness value of 60 or less.

Claim 10 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 2, wherein said film layer has a thickness in a range of 0.001 μm to 0.2 μm .

Claim 11 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 4, wherein said film layer has a thickness in a range of 0.001 μm to 100 μm .

Claims 12-16 (canceled):

Claim 17 (Currently amended): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet having a film layer made of a fine metal powder formed on a metal surface of the magnet, particles of the fine metal powder having a ~~longer~~ longest diameter in a range of 0.001 μm to 5 μm , wherein said magnet is produced by placing a rare earth metal-based permanent magnet and a fine metal powder producing material into a treating vessel, and vibrating and/or agitating both of said permanent magnet and said fine metal powder producing material in said treating vessel so as to form said film layer on said metal surface of said magnet, wherein said permanent magnet is a sintered magnet or a bonded magnet.

Claim 18 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1 or 17, wherein said rare earth metal-based permanent magnet has a plated film on its surface.

Claim 19 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1 or 17, wherein said rare earth metal-based permanent magnet has a metal oxide film on its surface.

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Claim 20 (original): A rare earth metal-based permanent magnet according to claim 1 or 17, wherein said rare earth metal-based permanent magnet has a chemical conversion coating film on its surface.